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qualizing temporal personal property, why not equalize stipend, real estate, goods, chattels, &c.? Such a principle is contrary to reason and religion, and is the introduction of anarchy and confusion.

7th. Reason.—Admitting, for argument's sake, the propriety of the overture, it must be acknowledged to be an overture of importance, the discussion of it should have been postponed for a year, according to a rule read to that effect at the opening of the Synod.

These reasons of protest, I claim to have inserted in my own name, and in the name of all who may adhere.

JOHN LOWRY, *Clonaneese.*

To which protest, Messrs. Dixon, Sand-holes,—Brown, Six-mile cross,—Muirhead, Loughaghry,—Reid, Drumbanagher,—and M'Auley, Ballybay, Ministers, adhered.

*The above is truly copied from the minutes of said meeting, in the hands of the Clerk of the Burgher Synod.*

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*To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.*

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THE following account of the village of Blackstaff; is extracted from the "Statistical Survey of the County Monaghan;" as it is far from being generally known, I hope you will deem it worthy of insertion.

S.M.S.

"IT may not be unacceptable, to say a few words of the quondam village of Blackstaff, which is now no more. This village was composed of about two hundred miserable cabins, and its site was in the centre of five hundred acres of a range of bog, heath, and immense rock, which altogether had as gloomy and forbidding a view, as could be presented to the eye; the district around these habitations was so wretched, so lately as ten

years ago, that it had never been attempted to be cultivated; and the poor people who inhabited them, each had then a very limited portion of land, at a considerable distance from Blackstaff.

"A curious law prevailed in this village for centuries, and was always implicitly attended to, until the colony were dispersed, and their huts levelled. On a particular day, annually, all the inhabitants met together, and chose from amongst themselves, a mayor or chief magistrate, to whom was intrusted the care of the village, and he was intrusted with due power and authority to maintain order and proper conduct amongst his fellow-citizens. This potentate decided all quarrels and disputes, and there never was an instance known of an appeal from his decree, so impartially was justice administered. The only qualification for this office was the largest potato-garden, whose occupier was sure to be elected mayor. His fees of office, on any application, was a bottle of *Whiskey* which he always invited the disputants to partake of with him, that he might see them friends again; and it so happened, whether from the little quarrels of his neighbours, or their love for conviviality, so much of his time had to be devoted to the joys of the bottle, that his potato garden was neglected during his mayoralty, and never was there an instance of his enjoying it for two successive years. It is not a little extraordinary, that so implicit an obedience was paid to his decisions, that the neighbouring magistrates had never any trouble from this quarter.

"The inconvenient distance of their habitations from their farms, and the danger of allowing so many many families in close compact in the late disturbed times, occasioned the necessity of dispersing them;

and cabins having been built on their several farms, they were reluctantly obliged to abandon their favourite village, to which they long had clung with all the inherent fondness, which attaches human nature to our native soil; or has their patriotism been extinguished, as they yet frequently visit its dear remains, and on the ruins of Blackstaff, still celebrate their ancient sports and pastimes."

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

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ON TEA.

"Gentle tea, that smells like new-won hay."

THERE are few, if any, of the necessities or luxuries of life, of which the use has increased so much within the last 200 years, as that of tea. At the tables of both the wealthy and poor, the increase has been very remarkable, so much so, that this article, which, within the above-mentioned time, scarcely made its appearance, even in our custom-house books, now forms an important article in the revenue, paying, before it arrives on our tables, upwards of eighty per cent.

In the present age, the increase of its use has been very conspicuous; about sixty years ago, it was only drank by persons in the higher ranks of life; and within my memory, which falls short of that time, if those who were in pretty comfortable circumstances, used it on a Christmas morning, Easter-sunday, or the unexpected visit of a friend, the outer door was sure to be secured, lest their neighbours should know of such an extraordinary feast. Even on those occasions, little respect was paid to what is termed elegance, by our modern tea-parties; the tea-kettle being rare, the tea was usually boiled in a common iron-pot, and sometimes poured forth in the common vessels

of the kitchen. At present, the scene is completely reversed, the doors of the lower order are rather thrown open on those occasions, that the neighbours may witness their good cheer; and even in the obscure hamlet, few are without their tea equipage, which usually forms the most striking object in the cupboard, or on the shelf.

Tea was first introduced into this kingdom about 1636; in 1680, it was drank mixed with milk or cream, and in 1687, many persons smoked it like tobacco. By a computation taken about 16 years ago, it was supposed that 18 or 20,000,000 lbs. weight was consumed annually in Great Britain and Ireland, since which time, its use is certainly on the increase. The exports from Great Britain to other countries is also pretty considerable; in 1809, £.714,989 worth was exported, by the custom house's returns, beside that by smugglers, which is supposed to amount to a considerable sum.

Part of the cheap teas are believed to be factitious; formerly they were said to be more so than at present. In 1724, 1730, and 1776, the legislature passed several acts against this practice, which had then increased to a great degree. The leaves said to have been used in this manner, were those of the ash and aloe, both being boiled and dried; the leaves of other plants have been used lately for the like purpose; the deception is not easily discovered by the eye, after they have undergone the processes of boiling, drying, and beeling.

Many treatises have been written on the qualities of tea, some of which endeavour to prove, that it debiliates the constitution; this perhaps may be true, as far as it respects the cheap teas used by the poorer classes, but it is more than